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S E R M O N

PREACHED AT
BURY ST. EDMUND'S,

On the 31st. of AUGUST, 1772.

BEFORE A RESPECTABLE BODY OF
FREE and ACCEPTED MASONS,
THERE ASSEMBLED:
TO CONSTITUTE THE
ROYAL EDMUND LODGE.

By the Rev. J. C. ^K a BROTHER.

B U R Y :

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M,DCC,LXXIII.

DEDICATION

TO THE
HONORABLE
MEMBERS OF THE
HONORABLE HOUSE OF COMMONS

FROM
HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF SUTHERLAND
AND HIS LORDSHIP THE MARQUESS OF DUNDALD

IN
REPLY TO A RESOLUTION PASSED
ON THE 11TH OF APRIL 1846

AND
IN
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE
HONORABLE HOUSE OF COMMONS



REGULAR
AND
PERMANENT

REPRESENTATION
OF THE
HONORABLE HOUSE OF COMMONS

THE
FOLLOWING
RESOLUTIONS

WERE
PASSED
ON THE 11TH OF APRIL 1846

CONSIDERING
THAT
THE
HONORABLE HOUSE OF COMMONS

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HONORABLE HOUSE OF COMMONS

RESOLVED
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HONORABLE HOUSE OF COMMONS

SHALL
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AND
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DEDICATION.

TO ROWLAND HOLT, Esq;

PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER of SUFFOLK,

AND ALL OTHER MASONS,

WHERESOEVER UNITED IN

REGULAR LODGES.

Right Worshipful Sir and Brethren,

TH E following Discourse which I had the Honor to preach at the Constituting of the *Royal Edmund* Lodge at *Bury*, I have at the earnest Request of several Brethren at last submitted to the good or bad Censure of the Public. I shall be extremely Happy if any Part of it may tend to promote the good of
Masonry,

(vi)
Masonry, or be a Means of removing and silencing those unjust Prejudices and Reflections, which many Persons, who were never initiated, wantonly cast upon that Ancient and Honourable Society of *Free and Accepted Masons*.

The Principles upon which this Society is established, the Regulations by which it is supported, and the Ends for which it is calculated, are certainly laudable and Praise-worthy, for they are a Pursuit of useful Knowledge, a Continuance in Amity, and a Reciprocal Disposition to all the good Offices of Humanity and Benevolence. Nevertheless the best of Institutions may accidentally be abused, but the Unworthiness of any Individual ought never to be a Reflection on the whole Body
or

or the Profession itself. That Man must have a very mean and low Notion of Friendship, who proposes no other End in a Lodge of *Free Masons* than killing of Time or eating and drinking, and thereby *making Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof*. The Holy Scriptures point out to us much more noble Purposes and Designs of Conversation; It directs our Speech to administer Grace, and that we should build up one another in our Holy Faith. St. Peter well advises us to *give all Diligence to add to our Faith, Virtue, and to Virtue, Knowledge, and to Knowledge, Temperance, and to Temperance, Patience, and to Patience, Godliness, and to Godliness, Brotherly Kindness, and to Brotherly Kindness, Charity. Brotherly Kindness*

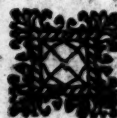
ness is the *Duty* which one Christian owes to another, *Charity*, is more extensive, and is the *Duty* which a *Man* owes to *Mankind*. If therefore *these things* be in us and abound, they will make us, that we shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord JESUS CHRIST. May GOD grant us Grace to obey His Precepts, and imitate His Example, is

The Hearty Prayer of

Your sincere

Brother and Well-wisher,

J. C.



First of TIMOTHY, 1 Chap. 8 Verse.

*We know that the Law is good, if a Man
use it lawfully.*

ST. PAUL being in a wonderful Manner called to be a chosen Vessel to bear the divine Treasure of the Gospel to *Jews* and *Gentiles*; a main Subject of his Discourses was to prove that Man could not be justify'd and sav'd by the Works of the *Law*, but only by Faith in JESUS CHRIST, as The *Messiah*, the *Person* that was ordained of *GOD* and sent to be the *Saviour* of the World.

The *Jews* (who rested in the Law) were upon this Account such implacable Enemies, that they took Counsel to kill Him; misrepresenting His Doctrine as tho' he would render the *Law* of God void and altogether useless. Which Reproach the
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inspired Preacher rejects with Indignation, saying, Do we then make void the *Law* through Faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the *Law*. (R. 3. 31) And in this Epistle to TIMOTHY his beloved Son in the Faith, he thus delivers his Sentiments upon the same Head, "We know that the *Law* is good, "if a Man use it lawfully."

Which Words contain a positive Assertion, *the Law is good*, under a restrictive Condition, *if a Man use it lawfully*. And what the Apostle affirms of the *Mosaical* in particular, we shall upon Enquiry find to be most remarkably true of *Law* in General.

As therefore all *Laws* are comprehended under this Division, *Divine* and *Human*, I shall in my following Discourse,

1st. Consider the Necessity and usefulness of Both, as a Proof of the Truth asserted, *the Law is good*; taking Notice of the Restrictive Condition occasionally.

2dly. I shall shew the Goodness and excellency of the *Laws* of this *Kingdom* under the like Restriction; And

Lastly,

Lastly, I shall make an useful Application to *ourselves* in particular, and the *Public* in General.

And 1st. The *Divine Law* is either *natural* or *revealed*.

There is a *Law of Nature* written by God on the fleshly Tables of Men's Hearts, whereby the common Notions of Good and Evil are found within them. And tho' this *Law* was much defaced and obliterated by the fall of Our first Parents; yet they who have no other *Law*, are still a *Law* unto themselves: in that they do by *Nature* the Things contained in the *Law*, and thereby shew the *Law* written in their Hearts, their Conscience bearing Witness. Their Thoughts meanwhile accusing or else excusing, are the Sanctions of this *Law*; more fully expressed by the Prophet *Isaiah* in these Words "There is no Peace, saith
" my God, to the Wicked; but the Work of
" Righteousness shall be Peace, and the Effects of
" it Quietness and Assurance for Ever."

Tho' this *Law* was good, and the *Gentile World* upon *natural Principles*, knew there was a God; yet they glorified Him not as God, but worship-

ped the Creature more than the Creator who is God blessed for ever, Amen.

Wherefore God also gave them up to the Lusts of their own Hearts. For a Proof of this I shall refer you to the first Chapter of St. PAUL to the *Romans*, without enumerating particularly those Vices and Superstitions which were a Scandal to *Human Nature*.

When Men thus sat in Darkness, and the *Law* of Nature (thro' the Corruptness of their Understandings and Perverseness of their Wills) was not sufficient to guide them in the Way they should go, God was pleased to give His chosen People *Israel* a revealed *Law*, partly *Ceremonial*, partly *Moral*, to be a Lamp unto their Feet and a Light unto their Path.

The *Ceremonial* Part (made only for and deliver'd by MOSES to the *Israelites*) was on Purpose to reclaim them from Idolatry, and to keep them so fully employ'd in the Service of the true God, that they might not go after strange Gods. Which part also enjoin'd propitiatory Sacrifices, not only to stand in place of the temporal Sanction, but with an higher Aim to typify the Sufferings and
Death

Death of the MESSIAH, that *Saviour* that should come into the World; consequently to cease when the Event of that unfathomable Wisdom and inestimable Love should take place.

The *Moral* Part (made for all Mankind, and by which they shall be judged at the last Day) was wrote by the Finger of GOD upon two Tables of Stone, to signify its perpetual Obligation. This *Law*, St. PAUL tells us in His Epistle to the *Romans* was Holy, Just and Good. Indeed it could not be otherwise, being instituted by GOD himself, who cannot command any Thing that is simply Evil. But this earthly minded People did not use it lawfully; for measuring their Obedience by their Adherence to the mere Letter; they insisted chiefly upon the *Ceremonial* Observance; and neglected the weightier Matters of Judgement, Mercy and the Love of GOD; thus they caught at the *Shadow*, but let go the *Substance*.

As the Lamp of the *Mosaical Law*, thus shone but with a glimmering Light; GOD was graciously pleas'd in the fullness of Time to bring Mankind into the Sunshine of the glorious Gospel of CHRIST; A Revelation, propos'd to us with the brightest Degree of Evidence, clearly opening to
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our Faith the Prospect of Immortality; A *Law*, so full as to comprehend the Sum, Substance and Extent of our Duty; So plain, that what is absolutely Necessary to be known by all, is easy to be understood by all; and written so fair, that he that runs may read it. Moreover enforced by the most sensible and affecting Sanctions, Eternal Happiness and Eternal Misery.

Nevertheless had God insisted upon an unerring Observance of this *Law*; had there been no Remedy for our Lapses, no Indulgence to our Infirmities; we might still cry out with *Balaam*, Who shou'd live, if God did this! To our great Comfort therefore under the *Gospel* Dispensation, A City of Refuge is open'd for the Offender to fly unto, that is sincere Repentance; and there is as it were a Court of Equity erected, to mitigate the Rigor of the *Common Law*, by transferring the Punishment our Sins have deserv'd upon Another and his Merits upon us for the pardon of them. This Method the *Divine* Mercy contriv'd, as by which His *Justice* would be satisfy'd and yet the Offender sav'd.

For if any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, JESUS CHRIST the Righteous; and He is

is the Propitiation for *Our* Sins and the Sins of the whole World. So that by this Covenant the tenderest Provision is made for our Failings and Infirmities; He who falls may again rise to Grace; the contrite Sinner is restored to Pardon, and through Faith in *Christ* Our Repentance is entitled to Salvation. We know (we have an indisputable Conclusion that can admit of no Question) that this *Law* is good. Nevertheless subject also to the Restrictive Condition, *if a Man use it lawfully*. For unless we comply with the Terms, by Faith and Repentance, it will little avail us that such a *Law* is come into the World; and all the infinite Mercies of the *Gospel*, will bring no other Fruit to us, but that thereby we may receive the greater Punishment.

I proceed now to consider *Human* Laws; these also will appear to be good from the Necessity and Usefulness of them. Many Proofs offer themselves under this Head; for Brevity's Sake I shall only mention two, As they enforce the *Laws* of God and Secure the *Property* of *Man*. And first, *Human Laws* are necessary and useful, because they enforce the *Laws* of God.

Tho' the *Divine Laws* have such Powerful Sanctions

tions as eternal Life and eternal Death; yet as wicked Men walk by Sight and not by Faith, Things present and sensual influence their Hopes and Fears. This makes *Human Laws* necessary and useful to oblige those to be Subject for Wrath, that will not be so for Conscience Sake. And 'tis on this Account the *Magistrate* beareth not the Sword in vain; for he is a Minister of God, a Revenger to execute Wrath on him that doth Evil. 'Tis therefore the bounden Duty of the *Magistrate* to support the *Laws* of God, to encourage Religion and to punish Profaness and Immorality.

Secondly, *Human Laws* are necessary and useful, because they secure the Property of Man. Were Men without Government, without *Laws*; was there no common Justice, no legal Redress of Injuries; every Possession would be uncertain, every Labor fruitless, and Life itself expos'd to continual Danger. Violence would enter even into the strong Man's House and spoil his Goods. And were Men to do what seems right in their own Eyes, all private Property would be render'd quite precarious, as Selfishness would too much prevail. Hence it became necessary to form *Laws*, which under a just and prudent *Administration* are the firmest Security against Violence, Fraud and Partiality;

tiality; and indeed the only solid Foundation of public Peace and Prosperity, by protecting the Property of every Member, and promoting the Happiness of the whole Community.

Having thus prov'd the Truth asserted that the *Law* is good under the restrictive Condition *if a Man use it lawfully*: I proceed, Secondly, to consider the Usefulness and Excellency of our own *Laws* under the like Restrictions. When we take a View of the wise and excellent Frame of our *civil* Constitution in Regard to Religion, Liberty and Property, we may justly take up these Words of *Moses* and say, "What Nation is there so great, that hath Statutes and Judgements so righteous as all this *Law*, which I set before you this Day?"

As to Religion, How many *Laws* enjoin and support the Exercise of it? Providing for the Decency and Order of Religion, and the Edification of the Members of *CHRIST*. Granting to tender Consciences the Liberty of serving God in their own Way, prescribing a strict Observation of the *Sabbath* as a Day of Rest and holy Worship; punishing Profaness, Immorality and every evil Work. The Power of working Miracles, which was necessary to the laying the first Foundation of

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CHRIST'S

CHRIST'S Church, ceased soon after it was laid: and God has left it to be supported by the Countenance of Authority and the Assistance of *Human Laws*. Means which never were more Necessary than in this profane Age, which scoffs at every Thing that is sacred and makes a Mock at Sin. Like SOLOMON'S Madman, mention'd in the *Proverbs*, who tho' casting around him Firebrands, Arrows and Death, yet cries out am not I in Sport?

As to Liberty, in how equal a Balance is it weigh'd? True Liberty is not the Power of doing what we will, but of doing with Safety what we ought. It is founded on *Laws* which are calculated for the general Good and allot to every Individual His peculiar Privileges. And herein we have just Reason to boast, that the Liberty enjoy'd by *these Kingdoms* is as far on the one Hand from Slavery, the Result of arbitrary Power, as it is on the other from Licentiousness, the fatal Consequence of no legal Establishment.

As to Property, we are so happy as to be rul'd by *Laws* in Effect made by Ourselves, because by our own Representatives freely chosen; unless we are so corrupt as to be bought; then doubtless we have no just Claim to any Interest in them.

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But untill the spreading Cancer of Corruption shall have reached the Vitals of our happy Constitution (which God forbid;) we have safe Possession of what is our own; the Satisfaction of calling it so; the Freedom of enjoying it; and an Authority to recover it from the most powerful Invader. The *Law*, in this Sense, is no Respector of Persons, considers not who is high or who is low; but in this *Nation*, He that feareth God and worketh Righteousness, is accepted by it: may sit secure under his own Vine and his own Fig-tree, shelter'd from the Attacks of Violence and Fraud: the *Laws* being (as the Waters of the tempestuous Sea under the coercive Power of ALMIGHTY GOD, were to the *Israelites*) a Wall of Defence on the Right Hand and on the Left.

But however good in all these Respects the *Law* is, this Salt of the Constitution when used *unlawfully*, loseth its Savour. When it is dispensed with at Pleasure, when it is pressed against its true Intention into the Service of *Prerogative* on the one Hand, or *Privilege* on the other; when *Magistrates* are put into Office to serve a Party by the partial Administration of it; when Men fly to it out of Spite and Malevolence, or make it a Cover for Extortion or Knavery; in a Word, when an honest Cause is overturn'd by Artifice, the tortur-

ing of Witnesses, or the disguising of Truth; then the *Law* (tho' good in itself) loses its Nature and Efficacy, and the salutary Intentions of it are obstructed: instead of *protecting* it *oppresses*; instead of *relieving* it *aggrieves*. Just as Food, so necessary to the Support of Life, taken intemperately, weakens and impairs the Health of that Body, it was wisely intended to strengthen and preserve.

But, Thanks be to God, we have Nothing of this Sort to fear under our *most Gracious Sovereign*; Who like a true Father of His *native Country*, endeavours to abolish the odious Distinction of *Party*, the Bane of every Social Virtue; places his own Happiness in the Ease and Mutual Love of His Subjects; and esteems it His greatest Glory to govern a *Free People* by their *own Laws*.

If then we have any Sense of the unspeakable Happiness of serving God according to the excellent Form of the Church of ENGLAND, whose Polity is plan'd after the best Model of Antiquity; a Church for the Purity of its Faith, the Soundness of its Doctrine, and the Extensiveness of its Charity, *The Glory of the Reformation*, and the *Queen of the Protestant Churches*. If we have any
Gratitude

Gratitude for the Protection of our *Laws* and *Liberties*, and the many Blessings that descend to us from the BENCH, the SENATE and the THRONE; let us frequently think on these Things. Such Thoughts will inflame our Love and Esteem for that Government which secures (as far as human Wisdom can foresee) such inestimable Benefits to us. The Consequence of which will be, we shall fear God and honour the KING: prove the Sincerity of our Religion by the Innocence of our Lives; of our Loyalty, by a chearful and conscientious Obedience. Our Zeal for public Liberty, and the Welfare of the Community which depends upon it, will be steady and uniform; and not degenerate into Licentiousness and groundless Clamours which tend to clog the heavy Wheels of Government, by alienating the Affections of the People, and poisoning their Minds with Republican Principles. Since then we are so happy in having such excellent and good *Laws*, let us prove ourselves a *wise* and *understanding* People, by using them *lawfully*. For under such Restriction they will, by their Salutary Virtue, strengthen the *Body Politic*, and preserve the Health of all its Members by promoting the *Glory* of GOD on *High*; On Earth *Peace*, towards each other GOOD WILL and CHARITY.

CHARITY

CHARITY is an earnest Desire of universal Happiness, and an habitual Resolution to promote it. It is the Love of God, it is *Brotherly Love*, Good Nature, Benevolence: it is the Spirit of CHRIST actuating the Souls of His Disciples. This Virtue shews itself according to the different Exigences that require its Exertion: When Injuries are offer'd, then it becomes Patience, Forbearance and long Suffering; When Benefits are confer'd, then it becomes *GRATITUDE*; When Distress'd Virtue makes Application for Relief, it is then Generosity, Liberality, Beneficence; When Inferiors approach their Superiors, it is then Humility and Modesty; When Princes and Nobles condescend to Men of low Estate, then it becomes Affability and Courtesy; When *FRIENDS* meet together for innocent Enjoyment, then it is Civility and Complaisance. When our Neighbours meet with Success in their Undertakings, then it becomes Sympathetic Joy; When Objects of Misery appear, then 'tis Pity and Compassion. When we judge our Brother, then it becomes Caution, Impartiality and Candor; When we injure Him, *SORROW*; and if we are unable to make Him Amends, Prayer to God for His eternal Welfare, and a Desire, if possible, to suffer in His Stead.

In

In Short, this *Divine* Habit of the Soul becomes to Strangers, Hospitality; to Enemies, Forgiveness and Reconciliation; And unfeigned Love to all Mankind. In these Respects it appears Gloriously display'd in *David's* Behaviour (2 *Sam.* 24. 19) In *Moses* and St. *Paul*, it appears with still greater Lustre (*Ex.* 33. 32. and *Rom.* 9. 9.) But in a Degree most wonderful and astonishing to Men and Angels in Him who actually bore our Grievs, and carry'd our Sorrows; Who was wounded for our Transgressions, and bruised for our Iniquities; OUR LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST; **TO WHOM WE MUST ALL SUBMIT:** And to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed (as is most due) All Honor, Power, Praise, Might, Majesty and Dominion, now, henceforth and for Evermore. *Amen.*

F I N I S.



In short, the Divine Spirit of the Spirit becomes
to purify the Holiness; to I believe, forgive
res and reconciliation; And unassigned Love to
all mankind. In these respects it appears Glori-
ously displayed in the Divine Spirit's Love to
us. In short, the Spirit is unassigned Love to
all mankind (A. 28. 29. and 30. 29.) But in
a Justice most wonderful and astonishing to Man
and Angels in Him who naturally bore our Guilt,
and carried our sorrows; Who was wounded for
our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities;
Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; TO
REDEEM US FROM ALL UNJUSTICE;
And to whom, with the Father and the Holy
Ghost, be ascribed all Honour and Dominion
Forever, Amen.

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